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### Business Process Trends

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## Spotlight on Enterprise Architecture

**A Short Essay on Enterprise Architecture**  
**David Ritter, Director of Business Development, Proforma Corporation.**

Enterprise Architecture has long been touted as one of the tools needed to bridge the gap between business and IT. Despite the fact that Enterprise Architecture concepts have been around since the early 1980s, their critical mission of defining and linking organizational strategy with business systems and technology architectures has rarely been achieved.

So what has caused the resurgence of interest in Enterprise Architecture over the past few years? Proforma believes that the methods and tools used to capture enterprise views of an organization have finally matured to the point where Enterprise Architecture efforts can deliver on their long-held promise of aligning IT initiatives with business strategy.

### Early EA Efforts Fall Short

To understand how Enterprise Architecture has matured, it is helpful to look at how Enterprise Architecture has been utilized in the past. Enterprise Architecture efforts were almost always driven by the IT organization.

Not surprisingly, these Enterprise Architecture efforts focused their attention on developing an inventory of IT assets, and the tools employed to capture these Enterprise Architecture models were system modeling tools that focused heavily on collecting technical system artifacts. This thorough analysis of system and technology components did allow Enterprise Architecture teams to reduce the complexity within their IT organization. Enterprise Architecture projects frequently achieved operational efficiency benefits, such as standardizing technology platforms or eliminating incongruent systems. However, the ultimate goal of business and IT alignment was seldom achieved.

Despite achieving important operational efficiency benefits, these Enterprise Architecture projects put little or no effort into documenting and analyzing a company's strategic direction and business processes -- the very strategic direction and business processes which should be the driving force for IT initiatives.

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The tools and models employed by Enterprise Architecture project teams usually lacked adequate support for building comprehensive business and strategy models. In addition, the tools tended to be very complicated, so business experts were unlikely to use them to maintain the strategy and business models, which were vital considerations in the IT decision making process.

Alignment of business and IT will only be achieved by organizations that understand how to develop and maintain accurate models of their companies' business and strategy architectures, associate them with their system and technology architectures, and demonstrate the business value of their IT initiatives.

### **Today's EA Provides Clear Vision for Future**

Fortunately, today there are Enterprise Architecture tools that support all the different views that are needed to accurately represent the enterprise. Modeling tools, like Proforma's ProVizion modeling suite, empower improved collaboration between business analysts and IT specialists through an integrated graphical modeling and implementation environment.

In addition, today's tools are friendly enough that non-technical managers can use them. Strategic planners can effectively maintain their strategy models, business process owners can maintain their business process models, and the IT organization can devote its attention to maintaining system and technology models and the architecture relationships.

Today's Enterprise Architecture teams are succeeding by using tools that allow them to quickly and accurately capture all of the necessary views of the enterprise and analyze the relationships among those views. Process effectiveness benefits are being realized by analyzing the relationships among business and systems architecture components. Automation efficiency benefits and the strategic use of technology are being realized through the analysis of relationships between enterprise strategy and technology architectures. Opportunity creation benefits are being realized by analyzing the relationships among business, system and strategy components to ensure that long-range systems plans truly do complement the business plans.

### **Industry Analysts Agree EA is Vital for Success**

Why do you need to re-consider Enterprise Architecture today? Industry analysts have suggested that architecture teams that fail to move beyond the technical focus will come under increasing pressure to demonstrate business value. Some analysts have predicted that by 2010, companies that have not aligned their technology with their business strategy will no longer be competitive in their industries.

Forward thinking organizations are already using a well documented definition of their enterprise to make more informed management decisions. Enterprise Architecture is finally making business and IT alignment possible.

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### **A Short Review of Several Papers Published on BPTrends** **Paul Harmon, Executive Editor and Analyst, BPTrends**

In January of this year, our BPTrends Newsletter focused on [Enterprise Architectures](#). Paul emphasized the difference between Business Process Enterprise Architectures and IT Enterprise Architectures.

In the same month, Mark Nelson, a managing partner of The Mercator Group, wrote a wide-ranging essay on some of the different ways companies approach Enterprise Architecture improvement. To read this Technical Paper, check out [Enterprise Architecture Modernization Using the Adaptive Enterprise Framework](#)

In October of 2003, Julie Squires and Don Walker offered a Case Study that described how the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\) Maps the Future of Sensors that Gather Data](#). This study considers how NOAA's worldwide sensor grid was integrated using a new Enterprise Architecture.

In September of 2003, a team of authors active in both MDA and Enterprise Architecture development joined together to discuss [The Zachman Framework and the OMG's Model Driven Architecture](#). This White Paper describes the Zachman Enterprise Architecture framework in some detail, then shows how MDA elements support various cells in the Zachman framework.

In February of 2003, Mark McGregor devoted his Column, [Postcard from Europe: Europe Plays Too](#) to a discussion of how business process and Enterprise Architecture work in Europe is often different from how they work in the US.

In January of 2003, Richard Buchanan of the META Group described how the META Group's Enterprise Architecture planning process could be used in conjunction with the OMG's MDA methodology. Click on his White Paper, [Aligning Enterprise Architecture and IT Investments with Corporate Goals](#) to see what Richard had to say.

In the same month, Paul Harmon published a White Paper on [Developing an Enterprise Architecture](#) which put a special

emphasis on how a business process architecture should fit with other IT architectures.

Finally, also in January of 2003, Mary Hain wrote a Case Study, [An Enterprise Architecture for a U.S. Intelligence Agency](#), that considers how Conquest helped a U.S. Intelligence Agency create an Enterprise Architecture.

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